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AUTHOR Forsyth, Patrick B.; Danisiewicz, Thomas J.
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ABSTRACT

The extent to which value orientations of professional students differ by occupational groups and by the socializing effects of professional schools on students was assessed. Approximately 1,150 students in nine major doctoral-granting universities participated. Based on work by Bengtson (1975), a humanism/materialism score was constructed for each professional student by summing scores for respect or recognition, attractive appearance, financial comfort, possessions, sense of accomplishment and skill, and by subtracting scores for a world at peace, service, and ethical life. Collectivism/individualism scores were constructed by summing scores for an exciting life and personal freedom and by subtracting scores for religious participation, loyalty to one's own, and patriotism. Three groups of students were distinguished: full-fledged professions (law and medicine); semi-professions (education, nursing, social work, and librarianship); and private enterprise professions (engineering and business administration). The private enterprise professional student scored on the humanist end of the continuum, whereas full-fledged and semi-professional students scored on the materialist end. The full-fledged professional students were relatively collectivist while the semi- and private enterprise students appeared more individualist. Members of the semi-professions appeared to be relatively materialist and individualist. There was no evidence of systematic differences in value orientations of professional student as they progress through their preparatory programs. It is suggested that the findings challenge some popular beliefs about professionals and professional students. A value ranking questionnaire is appended. (SW)

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VALUE ORIENTATIONS AND THE EFFECTS OF PROFESSIONAL SCHOOLS ON STUDENTS

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Patrick B. Forsyth, Oklahoma State University

Thomas J. Danisiewicz, Cornell University

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In the 1950's and 60's, sociologists were fond of describing professional autonomy as functional for the disinterested provision of vital services to meet the needs of clients (Blau, 1964: 262). The often life-threatening vulnerability of a client was thought to be protected by the professional's intensive commitment to the client's best interests. That kind of explanation was perhaps plausible in an era when the term profession denoted doctors and lawyers and when American society as a whole more nearly shared a common set of political and moral values that today might be regarded as conservative.

During the decades that intervened between the common belief in the professional's commitment to "higher ideals" and today, some relevant events and changes have occurred. Our society has responded to more pluralistic interests, and consequently, there has been a decline in the influence of traditional socializing agencies like the family, church, and school. Subsequent changes have taken place in professional schools as well. Increasingly, those who serve as role models for the aspiring professional (the professional school faculty) are likely to feel uncomfortable trying to influence the values of their students. In addition, value pluralism in the professional schools, the result of recruitment from a greater variety of ethnic groups and social strata, suggests that the socializing effects of professional schools have been diminished. These trends along with the fact that the term "profession" has come to include a great number of occupations of less vital importance to clients, which recruit from a less elite and traditionally socialized population, and which utilize significantly shorter training periods, suggest that simple assumptions about the effective socializing effects of professional schools might be naive.

Even prior to the effects described above, there was little empirical evidence that professional schools successfully socialized their students

proportionally to the public trust demanded by the professions or the vulnerability of their clients. Eron (1955: 564-565) found that medical students became increasingly cynical, less humanitarian, and less idealistic as they progressed through medical school. Becker and Geer's findings supported this shift away from idealism (1958: 55-56). Gordan and Mensh (1962: 48-51) noted the progressive decline of benevolence among medical students. An excellent recent study, however, does indicate increases in patient and intellectual orientation of medical students throughout their medical school experience (Chappell and Colwill, 1981: 75). Studies of law students by Kay (1978: 347-354) and another by Erlanger (1978) have noted that law schools appear to have little effect on the values of their students.

There are those who assert that the only difference between the professions and other occupations are differences in power used to protect privilege and wealth. Among sociologists, this perspective has gained disciples during the last decade. While other reasons for the existence of professional power, such as those based on client interests, may still be argued, the persuasiveness of such arguments is lessened in the public eye by the sensation-fed examples of professional malpractice as well as less notorious violations of the public trust by those who claim to be professionals. Indeed, the entertainment media commonly portray the modern young professional as a decadent jet-setter and mercenary.

Yarmolinsky has speculated that "it is the human qualities of the professional that will determine his future role" (1978: 173). Others have suggested that all is lost; the era of professional autonomy has ended. In fact, however, we know very little about either the values of those who train to be professionals or the effects of professional schools on them. The preponderance of research has been done on the health professions, but much of that re-

search, conducted only within the boundaries of health professions (usually one profession at a time), lacks the benefit of multioccupational comparison. In addition, much of the research is based on data gathered prior to the full impact of the sociological and cultural changes alluded to earlier. Therefore it seems clear that the time is right for comparative analysis of the values of professional students and of the socializing effects of their respective professional schools. This paper reports the findings of a trial method for investigating the extent to which value orientations of professional students differ by occupational groups and by the socializing effects of professional schools on students.

Ritzer (1972: 74) said that "most students who enter the training schools of established professions already have a deep commitment," but students preparing for the newer professions may have entered professional school for nonprofessional reasons. If true, this somewhat speculative assertion would support the relative laissez-faire approach which the established professions have taken toward the nontechnical socialization of their aspirants. It would seem to demand significant socializing efforts on the part of the newer professions. The problem with the assertion is that there is little comparative, empirical, and recent evidence to support or reject it. This paper introduces some preliminary evidence relevant to Ritzer's assertion.

To investigate our speculations, and those of others, regarding the socialization of students to a set of "professional values," two specific research questions are posed: (a) to what extent do the value orientations of professional students differ by occupational group? and (b) to what extent do the value orientations of students in the same group of professions change throughout their professional education?

Method

The method for operationalizing value orientations used here is taken directly from Bengtson (1975: 358-371) who defined values as conceptions of desirable ends serving as guides to actions. A variety of discrete values are thought to be patterned according to broader cognitive categories. Both Bengtson (1975) and Fallding (1965: 223-233) focused on two dimensions (collectivism/individualism and humanism/materialism) and suggested that specific value orientations reflect the intersection of these two conceptual axes (see Figure 1 below).

Figure 1. Value Typology.

	humanism	materialism
collectivism	1 humanism/ collectivism	2 materialism/ collectivism
individualism	3 humanism/ individualism	4 materialism/ individualism

Bengtson operationalized these value orientations by asking individuals to rank order a list of 16 value items presented in random order (see Appendix A). The rankings of a sample of 2,044 members of a major health plan were factored producing the two independent bi-polar dimensions theorized (see Table 1 on following page).

The first eight value items loaded on factor one, four negatively and four positively. Bengtson indicated that seven of the last eight value items loaded sufficiently on factor two, three negatively and four positively. Friendship was excluded from the analysis because of its low factor score.

Table 1. Bengtson Data: Factor Loadings of 16 Value Items on Two Factors for Health Plan Sample (n = 1996).

VALUE ITEM	FACTOR I humanism/materialism	FACTOR II collectivism/individualism
Service	-.59	-.20
Equality	-.52	-.07
A World at Peace	-.45	-.22
Ethical Life	-.43	-.16
Financial Comfort	.76	-.06
Possessions	.58	.09
Attractive Appearance	.38	.20
Respect or Recognition	.27	-.02
Religious Participation	-.15	-.54
Loyalty to One's Own	.09	-.51
Patriotism	-.17	-.46
Friendship	-.12	-.15
Skill	.18	.54
An Exciting Life	.19	.54
Personal Freedom	-.05	.52
Sense of Accomplishment	.15	.26

Bengtson reported test-retest reliability of .78 for these data. The same procedure for operationalizing value dimensions was thought appropriate for examining the values of professional students. Twenty-one professional schools representing eight professions (medicine, law, education, nursing, social work, librarianship, engineering, and business administration) in nine major doctoral granting universities from around the country participated in this study. Simple random samples of active students were drawn from rosters supplied by each school. Data were collected through a questionnaire with approximately 50% of the 2,296 sample cases returning useable instruments. The results of an oblique principal components factoring are presented in Table 2 on the following page.

Although there are some differences in the loading patterns between the

Table 2. Forsyth-Danisiewicz Data: Factor Loadings of 16 Value Items on Two Factors for Professional Student Sample (n = 1000).

VALUE ITEM	FACTOR I humanism/materialism	FACTOR II collectivism/individualism
Service	-.51	.03
Equality	-.23	.21
A World at Peace	-.49	.18
Ethical Life	-.50	-.02
Financial Comfort	.66	-.00
Possessions	.51	.06
Attractive Appearance	.40	.10
Respect or Recognition	.39	.09
Religious Participation	-.27	-.48
Loyalty to One's Own	.07	-.52
Patriotism	-.07	-.30
Friendship	-.18	.11
Skill	.34	.08
An Exciting Life	.15	.25
Personal Freedom	-.00	.24
Sense of Accomplishment	.39	.00

Bengtson data set and our own, in the professional student data both factors continue to represent relatively discrete concepts with an inter-factor correlation of .17. As a result of this analysis, a humanism/materialism (factor one) score was constructed for each professional student by summing scores for respect or recognition, attractive appearance, financial comfort, possessions, sense of accomplishment, skill and by subtracting scores for a world at peace, service, and ethical life. Thus, the more positive score represents materialism and a more negative (or lower) score, humanism.

Collectivism/individualism (factor two) scores were constructed by summing scores for an exciting life and personal freedom and by subtracting scores for religious participation, loyalty to one's own, and patriotism. Thus, the more positive score represents individualism and the negative (or lower) score indicates collectivism.

It should be mentioned that in this data set, nine items loaded on factor one, including two that had loaded on factor two in Bengtson's data, and only five items loaded on factor two. The low number of items loading on factor two accounts for the questionable reliability coefficient (Cronbach Alpha) of .45 of the measure. The reliability coefficient for factor one, however, was .71, which is generally considered acceptable. Because the indicated reliability of factor two is so low, the findings reported for the collectivism/individualism dimension must be regarded with some scepticism.

Analysis and Findings

To examine the first question (to what extent do the value orientations of professional students differ by occupational group), students from the eight professions were grouped according to Etzioni's distinction between full-fledged and semi-professions (1969: XIII). The distinction is based on length of training, whether or not the occupation is involved with questions of life or death and/or privileged communications, and whether knowledge is created or applied rather than communicated. Accordingly, in this study, group one is composed of students aspiring to the full-fledged professions: law and medicine. Group two includes students preparing for those occupations Etzioni calls the semi-professions: education, nursing, social work, librarianship. Group three introduces students preparing for two occupations not classified by Etzioni but which are of considerable interest and can be called private enterprise professions: engineering and business administration.

Analysis of covariance procedures were used to determine if the three groups of professional students differed systematically on the two value factors mentioned earlier. The covariant procedure adjusted for the possible confounding effects of age, sex, and a crude social status measure (number of

years of father's formal education). Table 3 exhibits the adjusted means and significance tests for differences among the groups on factor one (humanism/materialism), the stronger of the two factors.

Table 3. Analysis of Covariance: Comparison of Humanism/Materialism Scores for Three Groups of Professional Students.

	Humanist ⟷ Materialist		
	Private Enterprise Professions	Full-Fledged Professions	Semi-Professions
Number	219	230	440
*Mean (Humanism/Materialism)	26.54	34.62	35.25

Source	df	SS	MS	F
Between Group	2	9042.98	4521.49	13.24 $p < .01$
Within Group	883	301550.88	341.51	
Total	888	311592.38	350.89	

*Adjusted for the effects of covariates: age, sex, number of years of father's formal education. No individual covariate had a significant effect on humanism/materialism.

The three groups of professional students do appear to differ significantly on the humanism/materialism dimension. Surprisingly, the private enterprise professional students scored on the humanist end of the continuum whereas full-fledged and semi-professional students scored on the materialist end.

Table 4 demonstrates that there were also systematic differences among the three groups of professional students on the collectivist/individualist dimension. The full-fledged professional students were relatively collecti-

Table 4. Analysis of Covariance: Comparison of Collectivism/Individualism Scores for Three Groups of Professional Students.

	Collectivist ⟷ Individualist		
	Full-Fledged Professions	Semi-Professions	Private Enterprise Professions
Number	230	440	219
*Mean (Collectivism/Individualism)	-15.54	-13.12	-13.05

Source	df	SS	MS	F
Between Group	2	950.74	475.37	3.63 $p < .05$
Within Group	883	115494.76	130.80	
Total	888	117417.94	132.23	

*Adjusted for the effects of covariates: age, sex, number of years of father's formal education. The only significant covariate was level of father's education.

vist while the semi- and private enterprise students appear more individualist.

Using the results of these analyses of variance, we can place the three groups of professional students in the Bengtson typology depicted earlier. (See Figure 2 on the following page.)

The value patterns of the full-fledged professional students were relatively nonhumanist; they did not emphasize some of the values traditionally associated with professions (service, ethical life, and a world at peace). Rather, their values were materialist. It should be kept in mind, however, that along with financial comfort, possessions, attractive appearance, and respect or recognition, materialist values also included skill and a sense of accomplishment, values that are traditionally associated with professionalism.

Figure 2. Value Typology With Grouped Professional Students Placed in Their Respective Cells.

	humanism	materialism
collectivism	1	2 Full-Fledged Professions
individualism	3 Private Enterprise Professions	4 Semi-Professions

This finding raises some serious questions about the constellation of characteristics which functionalist sociologists have used to define professions.

Full-fledged professional students appear to be collectivist, emphasizing religious participation, family loyalty, and patriotism rather than personal freedom and an exciting life. Interestingly, this value conservatism holds up even after statistical adjustment for familial social status as measured by father's level of formal education.

As might have been anticipated, private enterprise professional students were not so conservative. They scored relatively individualist, that is, they emphasized an exciting life and personal freedom. What could not have been anticipated, however, is the finding that the private enterprise students were the most humanist (emphasizing service, a world at peace, and an ethical life) of the three groups. This finding is somewhat bizarre in that it goes against the commonly held beliefs and biases against the industrial-business community. An alternative explanation for this finding might be unreliable instrumentation; however, the humanism/materialism factor is acceptably reliable. Possibly, business administration and engineering students are sensitized to

the belief that their values are materialist. But also within the realm of possibility lies the explanation that, contrary to popular belief, private enterprise professional students are indeed relatively humanist and nonmaterialist. On the negative side, keep in mind that being nonmaterialist also means that one places a lesser emphasis on skill and sense of accomplishment than do the more materialist full-fledged professional students.

The value pattern for students preparing for the semi-professions is also somewhat surprising. Members of the semi-professions commonly see their work as service oriented and altruistic. Material reward for semi-professional work is generally considerably lower than that in the more prestigious full-fledged professions or in private enterprise professions. Yet, the students of semi-professions appear to be relatively materialist rather than humanist; they value service, an ethical life, and a world at peace less than private enterprise students. With the full-fledged professional students, they value financial comfort, possessions, appearance, recognition, skill, and a sense of accomplishment. These students are also individualist, valuing an exciting life and personal freedom, rather than collectivist.

We now turn to the analysis of the second research question: to what extent do value orientations of students in the same group of professions change throughout their professional education? The limitations of the data necessitated dividing each group of professional students somewhat differently in order to create the comparable number of cases for each cell. However, the procedure should have enhanced rather than deterred the observance of group trends. Table 5 on the following page outlines the results of two analyses of covariance procedures (one for collectivism/individualism and one for humanism/materialism) for each of the three professional student groups.

On neither value factor did groupings by years of professional study com-

Table 5. Analysis of Covariance: For Each of the Three Groups of Professional Students, a Comparison of the Two Value Factors by Years of Professional Study Completed (adjusted for age, sex, and level of father's formal education).

Years Completed	n	$\bar{x}$ (collectivism/ individualism)	$\bar{x}$ (humanism/ materialism)
PRIVATE ENTERPRISE PROFESSIONS			
0 - 2	72	-10.75*	31.26**
3, 4	62	-12.99	29.19
5 or more	85	-13.91#	24.42##
		F = 1.11 NS	F = 2.02 NS
FULL-FLEDGED PROFESSIONS			
0 - 5	91	-16.26#	35.79
6	80	-14.8*	35.83**
7 or more	59	-15.82	34.33##
		F = .27 NS	F = .14 NS
SEMI-PROFESSIONS			
0 - 4	172	-12.00*	35.20**
5	153	-14.02	34.32
6 or more	115	-14.20#	32.09##
		F = 1.82 NS	F = .95 NS

* = most individualist period for that group
\# = most collectivist period for that group
** = most materialist period for that group
= most humanist period for that group

pleted have a statistically significant effect for any of the three groups of professional students. While acknowledging the cautions that apply to cross-sectional analyses, these data allow us only to say that there is no evidence of systematic differences in value orientations of professional students as they progress through their preparatory programs. The value differences among the three groupings of professional students pointed to earlier, then, are more likely differences possessed by students when they arrived at the university rather than socializing effects of the various professional schools.

Much of the power held by professional workers in our society is the pow-

er of public trust in the skill, knowledge, and responsible utilization of that knowledge by individual professionals. As the influence of some of the traditional socializing agencies declines, it becomes important for professions to monitor the value orientations of their trainees. Assumptions about value orientations, or their constancy over generations, may be naive.

Our preliminary findings indicate that professional students have differing value orientations based on whether they are studying for a full-fledged, semi- , or private enterprise profession. Of greater concern may be the suggested finding that those exposed to the professional culture for a longer period do not systematically display values traditionally believed suitable for those who will hold the physical, mental, political, financial, and social well-being of clients in their hands.

In summary, the use of the Fallding and Bengtson method for operationalizing value patterns was only partly successful. The value items clustered differently for this sample of professional students with the result that the second factor (collectivism/individualism) did not contain sufficient items to assure the internal consistency of the measure. Nonetheless, the findings presented here, with their cautions, challenge some popular beliefs about professionals and professional students. These findings emphasize the importance, indeed the necessity, of comparative study.

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APPENDIX

VALUE RANKING QUESTIONNAIRE

INSTRUCTIONS: On the next page are sixteen items (A through P) that people might find important in their lives. As best you can, rank the items in order of their importance to you by placing the letter of the appropriate item in the ranking column. Place a single letter in every one of the 16 ranks. For example, if item "J" were most important to you of all the items listed, you would place a "J" next to rank number one. Please rank every item and do not put more than one item in each rank.

		RANKING LIST
A	SKILL (being good at something you enjoy doing)	1. _____
B	A WORLD AT PEACE	2. _____
C	PERSONAL FREEDOM (independence, autonomy)	3. _____
D	RELIGIOUS PARTICIPATION	4. _____
E	PATRIOTISM	5. _____
F	SERVICE (devotion to bettering mankind)	6. _____
G	AN ETHICAL LIFE (responsible living toward all mankind)	7. _____
H	TRUE FRIENDSHIP	8. _____
I	AN EXCITING LIFE (novelty, adventure)	9. _____
J	RESPECT OR RECOGNITION FROM OTHER PEOPLE	10. _____
K	AN ATTRACTIVE APPEARANCE (knowing others admire the way you look)	11. _____
L	FINANCIAL COMFORT	12. _____
M	POSSESSIONS (enough things so you can do what you really enjoy doing)	13. _____
N	LOYALTY TO YOUR OWN (family and loved ones, church or group)	14. _____
O	A SENSE OF ACCOMPLISHMENT (achievement)	15. _____
P	EQUALITY	16. _____